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23 June 1977

MEMORANDUM

STATINTL

TO: ADM Stansfield Turner, USN
The DCI

FROM: Vince Davis

SUBJ: Relationships between the Intelligence Community (IC) and the Academic Community (AC)

This memo contains further reflections on part of the discussion at the recent lunch in your office including Bob Bowie and the Wohlstetters.

First, I strongly agree with all of the key points made by Bowie and the Wohlstetters, particularly:

(a) The need to "open up" the IC to a wider range of fruitful contacts and interchanges with relevant outside groups, especially with the AC.

(b) The need to include knowledgeable and distinguished foreigners in this kind of "opening up" process between the IC and outsiders.

(c) The need, within this "opening up" process, to utilize peer-group or control-group review methods (as in scientific and scholarly research within the AC), in order to assure against the enshrinment of conventional wisdom unchallenged by new thoughts.

On your quite specific question, however, as to whether the IC (i.e., the DCI) should issue a formal policy statement that would in effect reply to the new Harvard policy statement pertaining to Harvard faculty members working for the IC, I have a general answer:

Broad policy statements, press releases, or other forms of high-level pronouncements from the IC issued toward targeted outside groups, and particularly toward the AC, are likely to be viewed with great cynicism and suspicion, and will therefore be counterproductive.

Those academicians who are friendly, or at least not generically hostile, toward the IC would be skeptical of any such statement, on the assumption that our intelligence managers are too smart to really mean it if they say they are voluntarily cutting themselves off from potentially important sources that they might need in the future. ----- And those academicians who are hostile toward the IC would also be highly skeptical of any such statement, because they think that all press releases from the IC are merely Madison Avenue gimmicks with no integrity supporting them.

So, you lose either way, if you try to solve the IC-AC relationship problem by issuing almost any kind of general statement.

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As I have said to you in earlier communications, the IC-AC relationship problem is one that has gradually emerged and grown worse over the past 15 years (the problem scarcely existed before about 1960). Given the fact that 15 years have been required for the problem to reach its current serious dimensions, it is a mistake to think it can be dramatically turned around in short order by any kind of major symbolic actions or events. On the contrary, some very patient diplomacy will be required, moving in very gradual and deliberate steps, with a carefully considered plan, occasionally using "envoys" back and forth between the two camps--envoys who have standing and credibility in both camps. Quiet behind-the-scenes diplomatic spadework should occur before you play a personal role. You have good friends in the AC (or now in the IC) who enjoy substantial stature in the AC---I think of people like Bowie, the Wohlstetters, and Graham Allison, to mention a few. I myself might even be useful in some situations. These are the kinds of people who could serve as your envoys before you become personally involved.

Bob Bowie suggested the concept of a "safe house," and this idea is very close to my notion of "neutral turf"---a place where key members of the IC and the AC could come together informally for initial get-acquainted contact. You replied by asking whether quiet informal dinners at your own home would meet this definition of a "safe house." My feeling is that these kinds of dinners in your home would certainly be better than trying to hold initial-contact meetings here in the building. You are a warm and gracious host--it is a function that you can perform superbly. Nevertheless, this device of dinners at your home strikes me as a Stage No. 2 technique, not a Stage No. 1 technique. At the first stage, your home is not exactly "neutral turf." You are still the DCI, and your home would be viewed by a number of key AC members as not all that different from a meeting with you in your office.

Therefore, I return to my original idea (expressed in my early May memos to you) for carefully planned small seminar-type meetings to be scheduled on completely neutral ground, at a place like Airlie House in Warrenton or elsewhere around the nation.....even on a campus, where the academicians would feel very much comfortable and at home. I have previously volunteered to use some of my own campus facilities if you ever wanted me to be instrumental in helping you to pull together small meetings of the kind suggested here. I know some other respected academicians in various places around the nation who would doubtless be similarly willing to serve as a host and host site for you in this connection.

Ideally, as I said earlier, it would also be better if the Stage No. 1 initial-contact meetings included government people in addition to the IC people...for example, one or two representatives from State, Defense and the NSC, because most of the academic ill-will toward the IC is also aimed at the other agencies, and a broad-front "interdepartmental" effort from the government side would make it easier to get broad-front "interdisciplinary" representation from the academic side. Then, once a Stage No. 1 initial contact had been forged in this kind of setting, Stage No. 2 could very well include the dinner meetings at your home.

SUMMARY: Avoid general policy statements, broad pronouncements, etc., and press releases of all kinds in coping with the IC-AC relationship problem. Instead, move in quiet gradual diplomatic steps to restore good-will.

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